

**LATELINE PRESENTER TONY JONES INTERVIEWS  
MARTIN DURKIN**

**Tony Jones:**

**Martin Durkin, thanks for joining us.**

**Martin Durkin**

**Hi Tony.**

**TJ**

**Now are you seriously arguing that no government needs to take action to rein in CO2 emission, the international effort to create a new global agreement on CO2 emissions is a waste of time?**

**MD**

**Broadly speaking, yes. I'm certainly arguing that the evidence is such that we shouldn't take the theory of man made global warming as a proven to be true.**

**TJ**

**So the US government, the British government, the governments of Canada and Australia, most of the EU governments and their scientific advisors, they're all just wrong and in the thrall of some kind of swindle, is that right?**

**MD**

**Yes.**

**TJ**

**By swindle, are you implying a conscious fraud?**

**MD**

**I think there's an element of fraud in the debate, which is that the science is overwhelming, it's done and it's dusted. We now know for sure this is going on. On the contrary, there is an awful lot of – I mean some of the most basic bits of evidence that you would look to to establish the truth of man made global warming are simply not there.**

**TJ**

**One of the central arguments in your documentary is about whether or not carbon dioxide levels can cause climate change. Here's what you say:**

VOICE OVER

*'CO2 forms only a very small part of the earth's atmosphere, in fact, we measure changes in the level of atmospheric CO2 in tens of parts per million.'*

FORMER PROFESSOR TIM BALL, UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

*'If you take CO2 as a percentage of all the gases in the atmosphere, the oxygen, the nitrogen, and then argon and so on, it's 0.054 percent. It's an incredibly small portion. And then of course you've got to take that portion that supposedly humans are adding, which is the focus of all the concern, and it gets even smaller.'*

**TJ**

**Now, are you actually claiming there that because CO2 is such a small proportion of the atmosphere, that it can't be a climate-forcing agent?**

**MD**

**Well it certainly doesn't mean that it's completely obvious that it should be a climate forcing agent.**

**TJ**

**You're not saying, you're not saying that it isn't a climate-forcing agent?**

**MD**

**Oh no, no, no. CO2 is a greenhouse gas, and you know, it does affect us as other greenhouse gases do. But it's a very small greenhouse gas, and**

**greenhouse gases themselves only from a relatively small part of the earth's climate system.**

**TJ**

**Here's how climatologists we spoke to responded to that.**

PROF ANDRREW PITMAN

*'This idea that the amount of something is proportional of how important it is – is clearly silly. For instance if I've injected you with a little Ebola virus - that's a tiny tiny amount of something but it would have an immense impact on you and you would die. / The amount of something is not in any way proportional to have big impact it would have and CO2 is the same.'*

MARC DULDIG

*'I mean the ozone is far less of a concentration of the atmosphere than CO2 but we know the effects of increased UV.'*

**TJ**

**Are you saying they are simply wrong?**

**MD**

**Well if you look closely at even what all climatologists, even on the side of those people who believe in global warming say, they all admit that the existence of CO2 in the atmosphere is such a – that CO2 in the atmosphere is such a small portion that they need to be some amplifying effect for the small amount of CO2 to have the effects that are being claimed for it.**

**TJ**

**But the scientists that we spoke to look at this very differently.**

PROF ANDREW PITMAN

*'The natural sources of CO2 through the breathing of the planet is many many times the amount of the CO2 that human activity produces. But over billions of years the planet has developed its own mechanisms for taking back up from the atmosphere that amount of CO2, so there is a natural*

*balance between the breathing in and the breathing out of the planet. What we have done is that we've changed that natural balance by adding significant amounts of GHGs to the atmosphere we have upset that natural balance such as, we can now observe billions of tonnes of CO2 accumulating in the atmosphere that we can prove that is the result of human activity.'*

**TJ**

So what do you say to that argument put forward by Andy Pitman and others?

**MD**

I think its absolute rubbish. I mean the number of people who argue that there's some kind of natural equilibrium in the atmosphere in the earth's climate, I mean it is one of the most absurd ideas, and it's propagated by people who really ought to know better.

**TJ**

Here's another contentious claim in your film, again it's based on the historical record. You claim that the period between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries was hotter than today. Let's look at that:

VOICE OVER

*'Before the little ice age we find a balmy golden era, when temperatures were higher than they are today, a time known to climatologists as the Medieval Warm Period.'*

**TJ**

Now do you still stand by that claim?

**MD**

Yes.

**TJ**

AH

**Here is what our climatologist said about that:**

PROF STEVE SCHNEIDER

*'When I saw this picture which shows that the medieval warm period warmer than now and the right hand says NOW - this picture's 20 years old. All the data since then has come off the top.'*

PROF ANDRREW PITMAN

*'There is little doubt that the last 5 or 7 years has been warmer than any time in the Medieval Warm Period. And that's what we are absolutely certain about.'*

PROF STEVE SCHNEIDER

*'So to show a graph that's 20 years out of date, not to show what happened at the end, not to report the reports, that's just a lie.'*

**TJ**

**So the question is, why didn't you use the latest or even the recent IPCC charts?**

**MD**

**Because the IPCC charts that they'd like me to use aren't reliable. The reason why we used that was that it was a very famous graph produced by Herbert Lamb**

**TJ**

**What year was that?**

**MD**

**Early '90s I think. Now ....**

**TJ**

**Why did you use a graph that was seventeen years old when you could have used more modern data which shows what's happened in that past seventeen years?**

**MD**

Well, firstly if you look at what's happened in the past seventeen years, you don't find a huge change. We got to get this thing in perspective. When we are talking about temperature change in the past ...

**TJ**

Well that's not true.

**MD**

No hold on, when you are talking about temperature change in the past hundred and fifty years you're talking about a temperature change of just over half a degree Celsius in a very noisy record, where the error bars are very considerable. So when you talk about temperature change in the past twenty years, you're talking in terms of our knowledge of the climate history of the last thousand years, of a very tiny amount of change. I'd love to ...

**TJ**

But we have a very accurate knowledge of it because the instruments are almost perfect. We know exactly what temperature rises there's been in the past seventeen years.

**MD**

That's very untrue, we don't have a very accurate knowledge of it at all. We had a huge problem with the end of the Soviet Union that they closed a lot of their temperature reading stations.

**TJ**

Seventeen years ago we had an accurate knowledge and now we don't?

**TJ**

A very simple question about your use of this graph because it says it's a chart of the temperature over a thousand years right up to now. Now to me means 2007. But in fact this graph doesn't go anywhere near 2007 does it?

**MD**

**Well, I mean you can't just get a graph that's produced by Herbert Lamb on the various statistics and then add another bit of line to it...**

**TJ**

**I just want to get you to answer this question. Why you said now when it isn't now?**

**MD**

**Well that's what the IPCC does, it refers to, you know, years before now. I mean you know in terms of .. in terms of the error bars of that graph, it is absurd to quibble on the – when it finishes in terms of, in terms of dates.**

**TJ**

**It's not absurd because the 1990 graph, IPCC 1990 graph you used was superseded in a second IPCC report in 1995, in the third, in 2001, in the fourth in 2007. Why didn't you use one of those?**

**MD**

**I'll tell you exactly why we didn't use one of those. They were superseded by graphs which eliminated the medieval warm period. If you look at the sort of the old picture of the last thousand years, there's the medieval warm period, goes down to the little ice age and then up again. I'm trying to do it backwards so that people can understand. What it was replaced with was something which became known as the hockey stick, cos it looks like a hockey stick cos it goes trundling along the bottom and then comes up in a manner which looks more alarming than if it just sort of dips and then comes up again.**

**TJ**

**Well it is alarming, it is alarming because it shows a rapid rise in temperature from 1990 to ...**

**MD**

**It does ... which is why scientists then looked at the hockey stick, to see, because it contradicted everything—every other sort of set of data we had for the last thousand years.**

**TJ**

**By saying now in the graph you've left yourself open to the charge that you've deliberately misrepresented the graph and you've left out seventeen years of growing temperatures which don't prove your point?**

**MD**

**But you know this is what they do, they'll fix on something which is a moot point, personally I still think it's perfectly legitimate to refer to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as now, just as the IPCC did.**

**TJ**

**But they are hotter than the medieval warming period?**

**MD**

**No they're not. If you ...**

**TJ**

**Yes they are according to the graphs?**

**MD**

**According to the hockey stick they are, but the hockey stick is greatly mistaken.**

**TJ**

**Let's continue because your film answers the question or tries to answer the question, why is it getting hotter, with a theory that in fact it's the sun that causes that causes global warming.**

**VOICE OVER**

**AH**



*In 1991, senior scientists of the Danish metrological institute decided to compile a record of sunspots in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and compare it to the temperature record. What they found was an incredibly close correlation between what the sun was doing and changes in temperature on earth, solar activity they found rose sharply to 1940, fell back for almost four decades and then started to rise again.*

**TJ**

**Once again we ask our climatologist to have a look at the section of the film and to comment on it:**

**PROF STEVE SCHNEIDER**

*'They stopped the record because they don't mention it falls when the temperature continues so it's classic, pick the section of the record that fits your preconceptions and leave out the inconvenient parts.'*

**MARC DULDIG**

*'The graph conveniently stops at 1980 when the temperature starts to rise much more rapidly and the solar activity decreases. The opposite of what they claim.'*

**TJ**

**Why didn't you just continue that graph on to the present day because there are graphs available, which do that?**

**MD**

**Well firstly the graph that we were using was created by Professor Friis-Christensen from the Danish Space Agency. So it was completely**

**TJ**

**In what year?**

**MD**

**I can't remember it off the top of my head. But we were talking, that was part of the historical section ...**

**TJ**

**Twenty five years ago?**

**MD**

**And it was in a period, a part of the program, where we were talking about – it was an historical part of the program where we were talking about key discoveries in the history of, you know, recent history of climatology.**

**TJ**

**Shall I tell you what happens after 1980? The temperature continues to rise very sharply; solar activity falls off, in the other direction. That would have been very hard to explain in your film wouldn't it, if you'd actually used the modern data?**

**MD**

**Well I mean the graph that we used from Friis-Christensen was the graph that he published in a very famous paper that sort of came out. And was part of the program that we were talking about, the history of people understanding of what the solar effects might have been on the temperature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.**

**TJ**

**The section as you say, is based on his work. But when he and his colleagues saw your graphs and the way in which you use them in the program, they felt compelled to correct you. They wrote this. That their latest studies had explicitly concluded that after 1985, temperature continued to rise just as I said, while the sunspots cycle length flattened out and thus no longer correlated with surface temperature. And they went on to say, this point was not included in the narrators statement.**

**MD**

**But the point is, we've been inundated so much by the argument that CO2 is driving temperature change in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but what very few people are ever told that there is an extraordinary correlation between solar activity and CO2 for large parts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now, why aren't we told that? There is not a very strong correlation between CO2 and temperature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is a strong correlation between solar activity and the 20<sup>th</sup> century ... when those two lines diverge ...**

**TJ**

**Why weren't we told .... Why were we the audience entitled to know that the data for temperature and solar activity diverges sharply after that period?**

**MD**

**It's a very moot point. What happens after that period**

**TJ**

**Well not according to the Danish scientists it isn't?**

**MD**

**Well according to many other climatologists it's a very moot point what happens after that.**

**TJ**

**The story of the graphs gets even more interesting in a way because in the original version of the swindle you had another of the Danish graphs which they say contained false data. Tell us about that?**

**MD**

**Well that was graph. Well, we had a – they've got a graph that has four hundred years of temperature change and four hundred years of solar activity, and there was a gap on the – a very small gap in one section in ah, I think it was either solar activity or temperature, one or the other, and our**

**graphics guy very helpfully joined it up. Which was very embarrassing, and we have now corrected it for subsequent versions.**

**TJ**

**Exactly how many versions then are there of the climate warming swindle? How many versions of the swindle have you put out since the complaints started to come through?**

**MD**

**How many versions ... oh you'd have to ask Channel Four that. I don't know. I mean we've got an international version.**

**TJ**

**I counted at least four which have slight or major differences in them?**

**MD**

**Oh no we immediately made the changes that we could straight away before we could get other graphs done. And then the subsequent ones we've had graphs redone. And, to correct the errors that were pointed out. But I mean the thing is the basic argument is not changed by this.**

**TJ**

**But why were there so many errors in the beginning, this is the strange thing?**

**MD**

**Well because you know, it took us six weeks to get this thing edited. I had three edit suites going at the same time, the graphics arrived you know, a day before the program went out. And so you know, you know what the nature of television is, we sort of, we put the program out, we hope it's, that it's right. And as it happened there were three typos on the graphs, and one error in commentary, which we have corrected. But the thing is**

**TJ**

**But there were four different versions, you could make the case that the documentary itself is as changeable as the weather?**

**MD**

**Oh what a neat line. We are quite happy to go out and be really pugilistic and debate the science with anyone who prepared to do it. The thing that makes me slightly sad is. Oh I can't do that can I? The thing that makes me slightly sad is that you know there is this aggressiveness to anyone who comes up and says look, the science doesn't necessarily stack up. Look at the evidence there.**

**TJ**

**Let's move on. One key absence from the Australian version in Carl Wunsch, the professor of physical oceanography at MIT. Were you forced to remove him under threat of legal action?**

**MD**

**No we weren't at all.**

**TJ**

**This is what he told the Independent. They misrepresented me. My views were distorted by the context in which they placed them. I am the one who's been swindled.**

**MD**

**Yeah, and very serious allegations indeed. And subsequently we sent to Channel Four all the correspondence we had had with Carl Wunsch, and the full transcript of the interview and full tapes of the full interview with Carl Wunsch. And Channel Four decided that we clearly had no misrepresented him.**

**TJ**

**He says ... Professor Wunsch says he would never have agreed to take part in the program if he'd known it would argue that man made global warming was not a serious threat. Did you never consider that he'd protest be included in the polemic against his basic scientific beliefs?**

**MD**

**If you look at the, the full transcript of the interview with Carl Wunsch, we represent perfectly honestly and properly what he said. I remember getting the call immediately after the program went out from Professor Wunsch, where he said, my god I've just had several scientists on the phone berating me, absolutely attacking me for being in this program, this is absolutely awful, can you take me out, can you take me out. And if he wants to back out now and make this excuse, well I suppose that's up to him.**

**TJ**

**Martin Durkin we thank you for agreeing to go under the microscope and talking about pro and cons of this documentary and flaws and trying to explain them and thank you for joining us.**

**MD**

**No flaws no flaws no flaws.**

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